

zations, and aid donors, and by encouraging the dissemination of information derived from new technology (e.g., early warning of impending drought) to farmers.

The United States has strongly supported the Convention's innovative approach to combatting dryland degradation. I believe it will help Africans and others to make better use of fragile resources without requiring increased development assistance. Ratification by the United States would promote effective implementation of the Convention and is likely to encourage similar action by other countries whose participation would also promote effective implementation.

United States obligations under the Convention would be met under existing law and ongoing assistance programs.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to this Convention and its Annexes, with the declaration described in the accompanying report of the Secretary of State, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
August 2, 1996.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Letter to the Speaker of the House on Illegal Immigration Legislation *August 2, 1996*

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Reversing decades of neglect, this Administration has dedicated unprecedented resources and enforcement effort to curtailing illegal immigration. Our comprehensive strategy to restore the rule of law to illegal immigration enforcement has done more in three years than was done in thirty years before. It includes:

1) *Gaining control of our borders.* This Administration is deploying more Border Patrol agents than any previous Administration. In FY 1996, we will deploy an additional 1,000 new and reassigned agents. Overall, the Administration has increased the number of Border Patrol agents at the southwest border by 40%

since 1993. For the first time, Border Patrol agents are being equipped with the high technology resources needed to do the job, including sensors, night scopes, computers and encrypted radios. Strengthened anti-smuggling efforts have reduced the criminal transport and exploitation of smuggled aliens.

2) *Safeguarding the interests of legal workers.* This Administration is the first to initiate effective enforcement of employer sanctions and worksite standards. In addition, I issued an Executive Order to keep federal contracts from going to businesses that knowingly hire illegal workers. We are also testing a computer work authorization verification system and are creating more fraud-resistant immigration documents.

3) *Removing criminal and other deportable aliens from the country.* In 1995, this Administration removed a record number of criminal and other illegal aliens from this country—74% more than in FY 1990.

Most of H.R. 2202, the Immigration in the National Interest Act, supports the steps we have taken. I continue to urge Congress to pass these provisions and present me with the additional tools that I need to continue the progress we have made.

However, there is a right way and a wrong way to fight illegal immigration. The Gallegly Amendment and the compromise being considered during the conference process would result in kicking children out of school and onto the streets. The street is no place for children to learn; children should be in school. This proposal is an unacceptable and ineffective way to fight illegal immigration. And the proposed compromise—which will still require states to verify the immigration status of all children, and permit states to exclude those who cannot afford to pay tuition—is as objectionable as the original provision. Congress should reject it.

If the immigration bill contains this provision, I will veto it. We can agree on so much in the legislation that would help what we are already doing. Let us move forward with

illegal immigration enforcement legislation without this misguided measure.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 3.

The President's Radio Address

August 3, 1996

Good morning. Today I'm pleased to announce a major step for protecting the health and safety of all Americans, especially our children. In a few moments I'll sign into law legislation that will revolutionize the way we protect our food from harmful pesticides. This is a positive and hopeful time, an age of enormous possibility for our people, a chance for us to build a country and a world that is stronger and safer and more full of opportunity than any that has existed before.

The way we will master this moment of change is the way we always have, by meeting our challenges and holding fast to our enduring values. Central among these is the belief that American families are owed some basic security. They should know that the food they eat and the water they drink will not make them sick.

From the day I took office I've worked hard to meet this fundamental promise. We strengthened and expanded the community right to know law, which requires industries to tell our citizens exactly what substances are being released into the world around us. Last year we put in place strong new protections to ensure that the seafood we eat is safe, and last month I announced steps to revamp our meat and poultry inspection system for the first time in 90 years.

Today we add the cornerstone to the solid foundation we've built for America's families, the Food Quality Protection Act. Three years ago I proposed reforms to overhaul and strengthen the way we regulate pesticides. This landmark legislation meets the goals I set forth then. I like to think of it as the "peace of mind" act, because it will give parents the peace of mind that comes from knowing that the fruits, vegetables, and grains they set down in front of their children are safe.

This legislation is long overdue. The old safeguards that protected our foods from pesticides were written with the best intentions, but they're simply no longer up to the job. Bad pesticides have stayed on the market too long; good alternatives have been kept out. There are strong protections against cancer but not against other health dangers. There is no uniform standard for what is safe.

Those weaknesses in the present law put us all at risk, but especially our children. According to the National Academy of Sciences, infants and young people are particularly vulnerable to pesticides; chemicals can go a long way in a small body. The Food Quality Protection Act puts the safety of our children first. First, it sets clear, consistent standards for all pesticide use on all foods for all health risks. It also sets that standard high. If a pesticide poses a danger to our children, then it won't be in our food, period.

Second, the act will reform the regulatory process for pesticides. New, safer substitutes will be approved faster. The sooner they get on the market, the sooner farmers will be able to use them to replace older pesticides that may pose greater health risks. All pesticides will be reviewed regularly using the best science available.

Third, this legislation will see to it that consumers get the facts they need. Supermarkets will be required to provide health information to shoppers about the pesticides used on the food they're buying. A family should be able to gather for a summer dinner knowing that the fruits and vegetables before them will provide nothing more than nourishment and joy. Americans have enough on their minds without having to worry about whether or not the food they eat will put them in harm's way. With this legislation, Americans will continue to have the security of knowing that the world's most bountiful food supply is also its safest.

Just as important as what this law does is how it came into being. The Food Quality Protection Act comes to my desk with the support of farmers and environmentalists, consumer groups and agriculture groups and the medical industry. After more than a decade of work, these diverse groups have come together to say with this bill, we do not have